

## State Advisory Council Minutes

Monday, October 5, 2015

**Members in attendance:** Deb Kelleher, Stephanie Lizotte, Sarah Lockery, Regina Moller, Sue Sherrick

**Also in Attendance:** Susan Smith, Irma Camacho, Alana Jones

**Members Absent:** Elizabeth Cannata, Claudia Carbonari, M.D., Lorna Grivois, Erica Kesselman, M.D., Alana Parkinson

### Welcome & Introductions

Regina Moller

Meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

All in attendance introduced themselves.

### New Business/Announcements

All expenses for the 2015 SAC Retreat have been accounted for.

This week the CRP application for 2016 and the dollar amount available will be sent out.

They will be sent to RAC co-chairs, and the RAs,

10/1/15 was the start date for the new CRP funds.

Discussions were carried regarding the final date of receipt of the CRP applications.

The cut off will be December 1, 2015.

Discussion was carried regarding the use of the funds.

The intention of dollars is for the activities to support the function and expectations of the CRP. Many have targeted enhancement of family involvement and training.

The CRP allocation is \$13,048 per region.

### RAC & Community Update

Region 1- Susan Sherrick. The RAC did not hold a meeting in September.

At suggestion of Ken Cabral, Region 1 Regional Administrator, the RAC by-laws are being reviewed for compliance and applicability. The Fatherhood initiative will now be part of the regular monthly agenda.

Region 2-Sarah Lockery. (Region 2 *RAC SAC Communication Form, 9/25/2015* –Attachment 1). The September meeting was one of the four each year that includes LIST and representatives from different Collaboratives. Discussions included better coordination with the various meetings held in the region. Gabrielle Hall, Clifford Beers Clinic, who participates in many of those meetings and will be working with Sarah Lockery to develop the methods to bring information to the RAC in order to streamline participation in meetings and improve communication. Not included was the Youth Advisory Boards because most of the meetings are held while the youth are in school. The YAB meet the first Tuesday of the month and Sarah will be attending the meetings to facilitate communication with RAC. Concerns expressed about the budget cuts that will impact services to adults who are caring for children.

Region 3- Alana Jones. The RAC discussed the communication tool and how it will be implemented. A Family Advisory Board meeting is scheduled. It will be held on Saturday to encourage parent participation was difficult to obtain at the actual weekday RAC meetings. Family Advisory Board will now be the voting members. There will be one big meeting in November to have everyone meet each other.

The new co-chair for Region 3 is Samantha Forbes, replacing Donna Grant who stepped down.

Various problems encountered statewide with the new 2-1-1 system were discussed ranging from outdated numbers for providers, long wait times or no return calls at all. Ms. Lizotte described her recent experience with 211 when she needed authorization to bring her daughter to the hospital –waiting over 45 minutes for a call back – and taking it upon herself to go ahead to the hospital. In the end no one ever got back to her.

Region 4- no RAC representative present to submit report.

Regina Moller noted that according to the *Action Steps list* from the Retreat, Region 4 is continuing their work on their organizational structure.

Region 5 – Deb Kelleher. (Region 5 *RAC SAC Communication Form, dated 9/24/15- Attachment 2*).

The RAC meeting was held on 9/24/15.

The Waterbury Bridge to Success, which is a partnership of local organizations, families and volunteers, presented. They have joined forces to ensure the city's youth, from cradle to career, have access to quality healthcare, quality education (by improving schools scores and reducing absenteeism )and other supports they will need to become responsible adults.

The September SAC retreat was discussed.

The Integrated Service System for region 5 was discussed. A possible configuration where the RAC would receive information, from the regional community collaborative, and funnel the info to SAC and to the DCF Commissioner was developed. In addition, an oversight committee issues comprised of providers and family members was instituted to look at regional issues in an effort to identify the gaps in services and underutilized services and what monies might be available to be funneled over to other services. The first Integrated Service meeting was held on Friday, 10/2/15.

The membership is being updated based on the requirements listed in the current by-laws dated March 2003 which states they are comprised of 21 members, the majority to be young persons, parents, others and less than 50% can be providers. They serve a 3 year term. Members who have not attended meetings and are designated voting members are being contacted to determine if they wish to remain on. A letter is being drafted to be sent out to nine of 21 members.

The RAC has looked into changing the by-laws but discovered that all RACs need to agree to a change in the by-laws before it can be brought before SAC and then SAC makes recommendation to Commissioner.

A pdf copy of the RAC by-Laws dated March, 2003 will be sent to SAC members. (Attachment 3 to minutes)

Extensive discussion was carried regarding the RAC bylaws and DCF Commissioner's role. Susan will discuss this with the Commissioner and work with Josh Howroyd.

Region 6- No report submitted.

It was noted that the Communication Form is the vehicle for RAC updates to SAC. It was emphasized again that the RAC report is due to co-chairs/administration no later than 3 business days prior to the SAC meeting.

The RAC/SAC Communication Form will be resent to the Membership & RACs.

## DCF Updates

Susan Smith

A while back we reported that we were getting a new LINK and SACWIS system. It is actually still in progress but OPM and DOS BEST are requiring that we follow a procurement process. We have been working with Deloitte for a while and they were supposed to be basing it off of a system that they are working on with DSS but folks did not feel what we were getting was sufficient enough to allow us to use that as a basis for a sole source and the funding level that was being proposed was astronomical, in excess of \$100 million. For a system that is supposed to be based upon one already developed for another jurisdiction—those dollars did not make sense for us. In the whole scheme of things it has caused about a 9 month delay. Although it is a considerable amount of time, it is not years off.

We are working with BEST to send out a procurement notice to identify a vendor who can start work on this.

We are not moving forward with Deloitte as originally planned. Although what they offered was better than our 20-year old LINK system, the proposed system still did not quite take advantage of the technology we thought was contemporary now and that would have meant that once we went live, it would have been even worse.

We received some bonding dollars to continue with the planning. So we still have support to actually assure that this happens. In the big scheme of things we will get a system that will really give us what we need.

We are still committed to it and have a vision for this to be a more comprehensive system that would allow for direct provider input, eliminate separate case plans and separate progress notes, give people the right permissions to see what they need to see, updating what they need to in real time providing efficiency in terms of work that we do. PIE will be a module in the new system. Those using PIE know that we have an update coming out that will break the silos that had existed—so rather than entering each child separately, we are now looking to do something where the kids are in a single “kind of pool” and staff would be able to then access that child if the information matches rather than in-putting that child multiple times. There will be the same searching capabilities but you will be searching to find if somebody has already entered that child.

An important topic for senior leadership has been better communications, and how to transmit information back and forth. We have a draft communication plan that we have just started to vet. It will be going live shortly in various sectors to ensure that information is being disseminated externally and internally.

We also want to ensure that it has a nexus with some of the open data portal work that exists because data is also a form of communication. Making sure folks are utilizing it, have access and are aware of some of the things the department is posting so folks can do some self-servicing in terms of some of our data. Towards the end of the year or beginning of 2016 it should go live.

Legislation was passed this year that requires more direct data sharing across the agencies. It builds upon the Executive Order that the governor initiated a couple years ago requiring that all executive branch state agencies post non-identifiable

administrative data on this common platform, the open data portal. They have now expanded this to do much more data sharing. This is still in its nascent stages. We have been asked to identify someone from the department who will take the lead and Susan Smith will be that person because she was already the lead for open data portal work. We do not have a sense of when it will be completed but it is a legislative requirement that we want to support and assist. As it develops, Susan will bring it back to the table.

3-Branch Institute- held in New Haven on October 1, 2015

The event focused on housing. It is an initiative that National Governor's Association and national legislators had grant funds that supported a handful of jurisdictions on learning how to work together across the branches. CT was one of those jurisdictions that was given that grant opportunity and together with Representative Diana Urban, Senator Dante Bartolomeo, judges, DSS staff, Commissioner, folks on her team, identified what some of the area of focus would be and how to work together.

In the past, we have had a couple of 3-B meetings – covering trauma responsiveness, also some of the ACES and the work that had been done there. This event was on housing with Dr. Ralph de Costa Nuñez, professor in New York. He gave a historical overview about some of the issues that have contributed to the housing issues and reviewed the various cycles, indicated we are basically back in yet another cycle related to this and described some of the impacts and effects. It was a very spirited session-most of the feedback was that it was valuable experience and spurred a lot of dialog and provocative discussions.

Staff person who runs data, Matt Adams addressed issues impacting housing stability for kids, connecting it to educational stability. The data showed CT is ranked very low in some of the areas in housing. In one area we were 49 which was painful and sad.

Myra Jones Taylor, Commissioner of Office of Early Childhood spoke about some of the needs of families caring for very young children who have housing instability. Commissioner Klein, The Director of Housing and Kristina Stevens, Administrator of our Community Clinical Support teams spoke about some of the work being done particularly relating to supportive housing. The event materials should be posted on our website very soon.

A video was presented that Region 3 recorded talking with families who have experienced housing issues, participated in the pilot program and discussed how life changing and impactful it has been for those families and their children who have gone from housing instability to now having a place to call home. That video will be posted as well.

The SAC was encouraged to attend these conferences if at all possible. They will enrich some of the discussions carried out at SAC and some of the work in terms of some of CRP responsibilities. The information could lead to figuring out ways to better partner with other state agencies, and of particular importance is the presence of judicial and actual legislators. We do not always get the great opportunity of having them in the room.

There is a dedicated web page on the DCF website for 3-Branch.

CRP – already covered.

### **SAC Retreat REVIEW**

The total number of attendees to the 2015 SAC Retreat was 45 of the 49 reserved.

SAC Retreat 2015 Outcome Survey, submitted by retreat participants at the conclusion was reviewed and discussed at length. (Attachment 4).

Also reviewed and discussed were the Action Steps listing the intended focus of each RAC region. (Attachment 5) and SAC's + RAC's Key Strategies for Synergy Achieved Through Collaboration 10.5.15 (Attachment 6)

Ms. Lizotte from Region 1- Ms. Lizotte recommended that at the time families are undergoing the ten week training for adoption or foster parenting that they be given information about these groups, like RAC and SAC, in which they could participate. It is a captive audience and could be a vehicle to enhance membership with family and youth.

Region 2 – A RAC representative will be attending the YAB meetings on the first Tuesday of every month. Ms. Lockery will be meeting this Thursday with Gabrielle to review and consider all the meetings that are held in the region and determine how they are all linked. The information will be brought back to the RAC to get feedback.

She will bring the Key Strategies for Synergy Achieved Through Collaboration 10.5.15 document to the RAC to clarify what Region 2 RAC's focus will be.

Region 3- Having the Family Advisory Board has helped. Parents are able to attend monthly Saturday morning meetings, from 11:30a – 1:30p. It is a pot luck meeting where child care is provided. CRP funds are used for gas cards, \$30, with the stipulation that they attend 3 meetings. This has made a difference.

There is also a training component addressing whatever parents think they need in order to participate better. They have heard presentations from DCF staff, the Regional Administrator, and John Jacaruso from Systems Programs. In its third year it has been very successful.

The FAB helped with the development of the regional strategic plan. The Regional Administrator is supporting Region 3 RAC because they have a wide variety of parents, foster and adoptive families, DRS families and voluntary services, closed CPS cases. The co-chairs, Alana Jones and Lorna Grivois conducted the recruitment for the FAB with the help of FAVOR family assistant manager who identified some of the families. This year the leadership was turned over to two parent co-chairs.

It was recommended that the FAB meeting be structured as a “committee” with voting rights recognized by RAC. This would assure their representation and voice at the RAC meetings even if they are not present.

Region 3 is bringing back the foster care of Bill of Rights;

Allon Kalisher has started the process of redesigning the RAC structure to reflect different voting and coordination. The work is ongoing.

Future agendas will include Mary Painter to speak about adolescent substance abuse, and fatherhood, and JJ needs.

The question was raised about the definition of “parent” in the context of SAC membership.

Below is an excerpt of the current statutes pertaining to State Advisory Councils and membership:

*(1) Thirteen members appointed by the Governor, including at least two persons who are child care professionals, two persons eighteen to twenty-five years of age, inclusive, served by the Department of Children and Families, one child psychiatrist licensed to practice medicine in this state and at least one attorney who has expertise in legal issues related to children and youth and seven persons who shall be representative of young persons, parents and others interested in the delivery of services to children and youths, including child protection, behavioral health, juvenile justice and prevention services, at least four of whom shall be parents, foster parents or family members of children who have received, or are receiving, behavioral health services, child welfare services or juvenile services; and (2) six members representing the regional advisory councils established pursuant to section 17a-30, appointed one each by the members of each council.*

(Sec. 17a-4. State Advisory Council on Children and Families. Appointment. Powers and duties.)

Region 4 is working on their organizational structure.

Region 5- Deb Kelleher reported that they have already started to address forming the Executive Planning ISS Committee to tie into the RAC; briefly discussed ways to use the CRP funds as a way to motivate and engage people. They omitted to bring the dashboard to the meeting but resolved that it would be brought to future RAC meetings henceforth.

Region 6- none submitted

**The co-chairs will re-send the RAC/SAC Communication Form to the membership with a reminder that if the RAC representative for their region cannot be present at the SAC meeting, they must identify someone else or send the completed form to the co-chairs three business days prior to the meeting.**

**New Meeting Schedule.** Attachment 7

Meeting ended at 11:30am.